

Appendix N. SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**  
**FOR THE**  
**SANTA ROSA AND SAN JACINTO MONUMENT**  
**MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Prepared for**  
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## **I. Introduction and Project Description**

### **A. Introduction**

The Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (the Monument) planning area occurs in two distinct geographic regions. The Monument encompasses lands which are immediately adjacent to one of the premiere desert vacation resort destinations in the County, the Coachella Valley of Riverside County, California; and also includes mountain communities, including Idyllwild, Anza, Mountain Center and their adjacent communities, which are small, isolated, and although subject to the impacts associated with tourism, affected on a much smaller scale.

The Monument includes 89,500 acres of land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 65,000 acres of US Forest Service lands, 19,800 acres of Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians' lands, 12,900 acres under the control of the California Department of Parks and Recreation, 28,900 acres of land owned by the California Department of Fish and Game, 28,500 acres of private lands, and 7,500 acres of land owned by other agencies of the State of California. The total area encompassed in the National Monument is 271,400 acres.

The management of the Monument will be a cooperative effort between all agencies involved, but the planning documents currently under review will impact only federal lands directly.

### **B. Project Description**

The purpose of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Management Plan (the Management Plan) is to establish a comprehensive interagency approach to land and resource management with the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument and to provide a mechanism for communication, consultation and coordination of activities.

The BLM and Forest Service are required, under the National Monument Act of 2000, to prepare a Management Plan which:

1. Preserves the nationally significant biological, recreation, cultural, geologic, educational and scientific values in the Monument;
2. Secures the opportunity to experience and enjoy the vistas, wildlife, land forms and natural and cultural resources of the monument, and the opportunity to recreate within it;
3. Manages the Monument in coordination, cooperation and consultation with private interests, the local advisory committee, federal, Tribal, state and local governmental agencies, interested owners of private property and holders of valid existing rights with the Monument boundary; and

4. Coordinates BLM and Forest Service management activities across jurisdictional boundaries.

The Management Plan is intended to be a bridge between the BLM's recently completed California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, and the Forest Service's Land and Resource Management Plan, currently being revised. The Management Plan will be used by the BLM as a Resource Management Plan and an implementation plan for the CDCA Plan. The Forest Service will use the Management Plan as an operational guide, tiered from the Land and Resource Management Plan.

Finally, the Management Plan also establishes the lines of communication and cooperation necessary to coordinate activities with state and local agencies, as well as private parties with ownership or other rights within the Monument boundary. These include the entities with ownership rights, as described above, and the Coachella Valley Association of Governments' Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, currently being prepared. BLM has committed to cooperating in that document's preparation and implementation, and will ensure consistency between it and the Management Plan.

### **C. Description of Alternatives**

Four Alternatives were developed for the Management Plan, all based on the level of intensity of management of the Monument. Each alternative is briefly described below. A comprehensive description of each alternative is provided in the Executive Summary of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

#### **Alternative A**

Alternative A results in the least intensive management and most recreational use of the Monument, including provisions for hang gliding throughout the Monument boundary; dispersed recreational shooting of firearms; unleashed pets outside Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS) habitat; and no permitting for parking on Forest Service or BLM lands with the Monument boundary.

#### **Alternative B**

Alternative B results in moderate management and recreational use of the Monument area, and more intensive management than that proposed in Alternative A, but less restrictive than Alternative C. This alternative would prohibit hang gliding in PBS habitat, limit recreational shooting of firearms to designated areas, allow leashed pets outside PBS habitat, and allow parking on Forest Service lands without a permit.

#### **Alternative C**

Alternative C represents the most restrictive alternative, and results in the most intense management of lands within the Monument boundary. This alternative includes limitations to some recreational activities to protect and enhance Monument resource values, including the prohibition of hang gliding and recreational shooting; pets allowed only at developed facilities and on paved roads outside PBS habitat; and the requirement for a permit and/or fee for parking on BLM and Forest Service lands (the BLM does not currently charge a fee, the Forest Service fee would continue to be implemented).

**Alternative D**

Alternative D is the No Action Alternative, and assumes that management of the Monument would continue as currently occurs. This alternative does not create opportunities for enhancement of Monument values other than those established in the enabling legislation. Alternative D should be used as a comparison of the other Alternatives to current management of land within the Monument boundary.

Since in many cases the management strategies proposed in the Management Plan are general, and do not lend themselves to multiple options, alternative discussions are often combined, and impacts are compared to the No Action Alternative (Alternative D).

## **II. Demographic Profile**

The following section describes the demographics of the areas surrounding the Monument. These areas include the cities and unincorporated Riverside County lands in the Coachella Valley, the unincorporated mountain communities of Anza, Idyllwild, and Mountain Center, and the desert pass communities of Cabazon, Beaumont and Banning. All these communities have been included in the analysis because of their proximity to the Monument boundary, their potential location as “gateways” to the Monument, and the potential for their being impacted by the Management Plan.

### **A. Regional Economy and Demographics**

Population. Population growth surrounding the Monument has varied depending on the area. In the Coachella Valley, growth has been very rapid, as the Valley’s cities have attracted a more diverse and year-round population. In the mountain communities, on the other hand, the perceived limitations of access, job opportunities and water availability have resulted in considerably less significant growth. As described in the Table below, the Coachella Valley population more than doubled during the 1980s, from 91,124 to 194,718. During the 1990s, the population of the Coachella Valley grew to 274,470, which represents a 10-year gain of 79,752 or 41%. In the Mountain Communities, the population increase only 16%, demonstrating the differing pressures of the two areas. Altogether, the population of the planning area in 2000 was estimated at 320,522 persons.

**Table II-1**  
**Population Trends for the Planning Area, 1980-2000**

<b>City/Place</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>Population 1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Incorporated Coachella Valley</b>			
Cathedral City	9,500 <sup>1</sup>	30,085	42,647
Coachella	9,129	16,896	22,724
Desert Hot Springs	5,941	11,668	16,582
Indian Wells	1,394	2,647	3,816
Indio	21,611	36,793	49,116
La Quinta	3,328	11,215	23,694
Palm Desert	11,081	23,252	41,155
Palm Springs	32,359	40,181	42,807
Rancho Mirage	6,281	9,778	13,249
<b>Unincorporated Coachella Valley</b>			
Bermuda Dunes	N/A <sup>2</sup>	4,571	6,229
Mecca	N/A <sup>2</sup>	1,966	5,402
Morongo Valley	1,193	1,544	1,929
Thousand Palms	2,732	4,122	5,120
<b>Mountain Communities</b>			
Anza	1,057	1,860	3,773
Idyllwild	3,123	3,975	3,635
Mountain Center	1,228	1,896	1,553
<b>Desert Pass Communities</b>			
Banning	14,951	20,570	23,443
Beaumont	12,322	9,685	11,315
Cabazon	1,521	1,588	2,333

<sup>1</sup> Cathedral City was not incorporated until 1981.

<sup>2</sup> Data not tabulated in 1980.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1980, 1990, 2000.

The Coachella Valley population is expected to continue to grow rapidly over the next two decades. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) forecasts that the population will reach approximately 440,301 by year 2010, and 540,901 by year 2020.<sup>1</sup> At their historic rate of growth, the Mountain Communities can be expected to grow to 10,386 in 2010, and 12,037 in 2020<sup>2</sup>, and the Desert Pass communities to 41,542 in 2010, and 46,527 by 2020<sup>3</sup>.

**Median Age.** In 2000, the median age of residents living in the Monument planning area ranged from a low of 22.6 in Mecca, to a high of 63.4 in Indian Wells.<sup>4</sup> This wide range of ages is representative of the valley's diverse population, which includes students, young families, middle-aged professionals, retirees and seniors. In the Mountain Communities, the median age

<sup>1</sup> Southern California Association of Governments, letter correspondence to City of La Quinta, May 23, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Terra Nova Planning & Research estimates, assuming 15.9% decennial growth rate.

<sup>3</sup> Terra Nova Planning & Research estimates, assuming 12% decennial growth rate.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

range was much less varied, standing at 42.3 in Anza, 46.5 in Idyllwild, and 45.9 in Mountain Center. Finally, in the Desert Pass communities, Banning has a median age of 40.1 years, Beaumont 31.1 years, and Cabazon 35.6 years<sup>5</sup>.

Race and Ethnicity. The Monument planning area is primarily Caucasian, with approximately 68.8% of residents in the region classifying themselves as “white.” However, nearly half (44.5%) of the population in the Coachella Valley identifies itself as Hispanic or Latino, of any race, while only 12.6% of the Mountain Communities’ population identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, and 31.3% of the residents of the Desert Pass communities identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. The Table below describes the region’s racial/ethnic composition, according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

**Table II-2**  
**Ethnicity in the Planning Area, 2000**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Population</b>	
	<b>Total No.</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	220,674	68.8%
Black or African American	8,725	2.7%
American Indian/Native Alaskan	3,928	1.2%
Asian	7,531	2.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	283	0.09%
Some Other Race	67,969	21.2%
Two or More Races	11,492	3.6%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>320,522</b>	<b>100%<sup>1</sup></b>
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	134,973	42.1%

<sup>1</sup> Difference due to rounding. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

#### Households<sup>6</sup>

In 2000, there were approximately 119,293 households in the planning area. Average household sizes ranged from a low of 1.92 persons per household in Rancho Mirage, to a high of 5.04 in Mecca. In the Mountain Communities, average household size for each of the three zip codes averaged 2.4 persons, while in the Desert Pass, average household size ranged from 2.6 to 3.1 persons. This indicates that the region contains a wide variety of family units, ranging from singles and couples to large, extended families.

#### Employment and Income

The primary employment centers in the Valley are located in the Coachella Valley. In the Mountain Communities, Idyllwild has a local business community, and a considerable tourism industry. In the Desert Pass communities, local commercial and highway serving commercial enterprises are the primary employers, along with the strong retail component associated with the Desert Hills Premium Outlet stores. According to the California Employment Development Department, the number of jobs in the Coachella Valley increased from 74,146 in 1991, to 100,231 in 1999. This represents a gain of 26,085 jobs or 35.2% over the eight-year period.<sup>7</sup> The

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> California Employment Development Department data, as provided in “Coachella Valley Economic Review,” John E. Husing, Ph.D., July 22, 2000.



region's largest employment sectors are retail trade, agriculture, and hotel and amusement. Other growing industries include construction, business services, and distribution and transport services. In the Mountain Communities, there were 3,516 employed persons in 2000, representing 39.2% of the total population. In Banning and Beaumont, the EDD reported 16,850 persons in the labor force in 2002, representing 31.6% of the population. EDD does not report on the community of Cabazon.

Median household incomes in the Coachella Valley have risen steadily over the past decade. In 1990, they ranged from a low of \$20,687 in Desert Hot Springs, to a high of \$87,942 in Indian Wells. By 1998, the range increased from \$29,555 in Desert Hot Springs to \$125,642 in Indian Wells. These data suggest a wide variation in residents' economic situations and expendable incomes.

In the Mountain Communities, the median household income ranged from \$25,824 in Mountain Center, \$27,692 in Anza, and \$34,408 in Idyllwild in 1990. By 2000, the median household income had increased to \$43,487, \$30,338, and \$35,746, respectively. Clearly, demographics in Mountain Center have changed to include a more affluent component of the population.

Finally, in the Desert Pass Communities, Banning's median household income rose from \$22,514 in 1990, to \$32,076 in 2000; Beaumont's from \$22,331 to \$29,721, and Cabazon's from 13,830 to \$20,598. All three communities demonstrate a lower income level than most Coachella Valley cities and all mountain communities.

#### Poverty

The 2000 Census identified the following poverty levels, by race, in the cities in the planning area:

**Table II-3  
Persons Below Poverty Level by Race, 2000**

City/Place	Race				
	White Alone	African American	Native American	Asian	Hispanic
<b>Incorporated Coachella Valley</b>					
Cathedral City	1,421	199	38	68	4,022
Coachella	23	9	136	11	6,401
Desert Hot Springs	1,820	244	92	32	2,146
Indian Wells	114	0	0	0	15
Indio	837	337	90	87	9,077
La Quinta	652	20	0	29	1,069
Palm Desert	2,041	51	7	146	1,468
Palm Springs	2,698	542	90	91	2,916
Rancho Mirage	492	9	0	18	212
<b>Unincorporated Coachella Valley</b>					
Bermuda Dunes	287	0	0	9	54
Mecca	0	0	95	0	2,380
Morongo Valley	356	0	16	0	30
Thousand Palms	227	6	0	0	420
<b>Mountain Communities</b>					
Anza	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Idyllwild	303	0	9	0	113
Mountain Center	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Desert Pass Communities</b>					
Banning	1,498	639	277	410	1,759
Beaumont	940	54	50	22	1,127
Cabazon	376	23	78	5	214
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,085</b>	<b>2,133</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>33,423</b>

Based on the Table above, a total of 51,547 persons, or 16% of the total population in the planning area. As the Table above demonstrates, the number of persons below the poverty level varies greatly by community, and on a percentage of total population basis, is most significant at the eastern end of the Coachella Valley.

### **B. Overview of Coachella Valley Economy**

Agriculture was the Coachella Valley's dominant industry during the first half of the twentieth century. The region's main staple, the date palm, was introduced around the turn of the century by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the industry soon expanded to include the cultivation of grapes, citrus, and other fruit and vegetable crops.

As early as the 1920s, however, hotels, restaurants, country clubs, and casinos began to emerge in the upper Coachella Valley, especially in the Palm Springs and Cathedral City areas. Equestrian camps and resort hotels, including the historic La Quinta Hotel, were constructed in the lower valley. By the 1930s, the character of the region had been transformed toward the budding resort industry, with the marketing and construction of weekend homes throughout the valley. A new era of development emerged during the post-World War II era, giving the region its predominant image as a destination resort community.

Over the past three decades, the Coachella Valley has expanded to become one of the premier destination resort areas in the country. Today, it is characterized by high quality hotels, convention facilities, spas, and planned residential golf course developments. Approximately 3 million (overnight) visitors come to the Coachella Valley annually, and tourism has an estimated \$1.5 billion annual economic impact on the region.<sup>8</sup> The resort industry is expected to continue to grow into the future.

In the Mountain Communities, employment has been tourism based for a long period of time. The limited employment opportunities in these areas have resulted in residents seeking employment in other communities, including the Coachella Valley and Hemet. Since growth rates in these communities are also slower than those of the Coachella Valley, localized employment growth is also expected to be slow.

In the Desert Pass communities, the economy has long relied on highway serving commercial employment, as well as employment in the Coachella Valley. The retail sector has always been significant in this area, and was made more so by the construction of the Desert Hills Premium Outlet stores in Cabazon. Banning and Beaumont have also sought to expand their industrial base, with limited success.

### **C. Tourism in the Coachella Valley**

The Coachella Valley has long been recognized as one of the premier destination resort areas in the United States, and hotels and motels play a vital role in the regional economy. Accommodations range from highway serving motels, to bed and breakfasts and small hotels, to full-service luxury resorts with spas, tennis and golf facilities, and specialty shops. In 2001, there were 217 hotels and motels with a total of 14,319 rooms in the Coachella Valley.<sup>9</sup> Together, they generated \$346.5 million in annual gross hotel room sales. Regional hotel development and revenue trends from 1996 through 2001 are shown in the table below.

**Table II-4**  
**Hotel/Motel Trends in the Coachella Valley**  
**1996-2001**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Hotels*</b>	<b>No. of Hotel Rooms</b>	<b>Annual Gross Hotel Room Sales</b>
1996	225	14,061	\$263,863,690
1997	230	14,333	\$284,973,227
1998	236	14,566	\$313,052,359
1999	222	14,556	\$350,758,958
2000	233	14,763	\$364,427,229
2001	217	14,319	\$346,561,531

\* Excludes condominiums, timeshares, and rental properties other than hotels/motels. Source: "General Information Handout," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1999 and 2002.

<sup>8</sup> "Palm Springs Desert Resorts Fact Sheet," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau, Spring 2000.

<sup>9</sup> "General Information Handout," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Authority, 2002.

The table above indicates that, although the number of Coachella Valley hotels/motels decreased by 8 (3.5%) from 1996 to 2001, the number of rooms increased by 258 (1.8%), and annual room sales increased by nearly \$82.7 million (31%). This suggests that the regional hotel/motel industry continues to be strong.

Occupancy rates represent the percentage of rooms filled in a month. In order to remain profitable, the typical hotel/motel must maintain a 65% occupancy rate. In recent years, occupancy rates in the Coachella Valley have hovered around this rate, measuring 63.0% in May 1999 and 66.4% in May 2000.<sup>10</sup>

Average daily hotel/motel rates vary with hotel size, location, quality, and availability of amenities. In May 1999, the average valley-wide daily rate was \$118, and in May 2000, it was \$116.<sup>11</sup>

According to the Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau, approximately 3 million overnight visitors stay in the Coachella Valley annually.<sup>12</sup> A 1995 survey of more than 1,300 hotel/motel visitors in the Coachella Valley indicated a preference for large-scale accommodations.<sup>13</sup> During their visits, the greatest percentage (44%) of visitors stayed in large-scale facilities with more than 150 rooms. The majority (49%) also intended to stay at large full-service resorts on their next visits, as shown in the table below.

**Table II-5**  
**Preferred Visitor Accommodations**  
**In the Coachella Valley**

<b>Type of Accommodation</b>	<b>% of Visitors</b>
Hotel/Motel	69.7%
Large, full-service resort	49.3%
Mid-sized hotel	13.0%
Small hotel	6.6%
Bed and Breakfast	0.8%
Condominium	7.0%
Friends/Relatives	2.5%
House	0.0%
Other	5.8%
No answer	15.0%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Source: "The Changing Hotel Visitor," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1995.	

The 1995 hotel visitor survey also indicated that 59% of visitors to the Coachella Valley reside in California, with the majority (48%) living in Southern California.<sup>14</sup> Approximately 60% were

<sup>10</sup> Reflects properties with more than 20 rooms, Smith Travel Research, as reported in "The Desert Sun," July 17, 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> "General Information Handout," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Authority, 2002.

<sup>13</sup> "The Changing Hotel Visitor," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1995.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

visiting the valley for pleasure/vacation, 16% for conventions, 11% for business/vacation, 5% for business alone, and the remainder were visiting relatives, passing through, or visiting for some other reason. The average travel party consisted of two people, and the average visitor age was 42 years. Average length of stay was 3.0 nights. The most favored forms of recreation were shopping (67%), sun and swimming (56%), golf (40%), and sightseeing (37%).

### **Tourist Expenditures**

A 1998 visitor survey conducted by the Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau indicated that the average daily expenditure per overnight visitor in the Coachella Valley was \$254, not including hotel room costs.<sup>15</sup> The following table provides a breakdown of the various types of expenditures, adjusted for approximately 4% annual inflation. It also uses the current (2002 YTD) room rate, as cited above.

**Table II-6**  
**Average Daily Expenditures of Overnight Visitors**  
**in the Coachella Valley, 2002-03\***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Average Daily Expenditure Per Person</b>
Hotel Room**	\$126.27
Hotel Restaurants	\$21.69
Other Restaurants	\$67.45
Retail Purchases	\$30.31
Entertainment/Recreation	\$50.22
Local Transportation/Auto Rental	\$16.64
Personal Services	\$3.86
Other	\$19.02
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$335.46</b>

\*Data adjusted for inflation

\*\*YTD 2002 average daily room rate in the Coachella Valley

Sources: 2002 YTD room rate from California Hotel & Motel Assn. in cooperation with the Smith Travel Research Company. Remainder of data, p. 18, "Visitor Study – 1998," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1998 and Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc. 2002-03 estimates.

As indicated in Table II-6, above, the average daily expenditure for overnight visitors in the Coachella Valley is estimated \$335.46.

### **D. Trails in the Coachella Valley**

The Coachella Valley is surrounded by County, State and federal parks and protected lands, which in turn are home to a system of pedestrian and equestrian trails which provide a variety of recreational opportunities for the area's tourists. Almost one hundred trails occur in and surround the Coachella Valley, giving visitors access to desert and mountain wilderness. Many people utilize this trail system for recreational activities like hiking, backpacking, wildlife viewing, and horseback riding. This section provides a description of the trails in and around the Valley.

<sup>15</sup> P. 18, "Visitor Study – 1998," Palm Springs Desert Resorts Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1998.

The Monument Plan will include restrictions to trail use as established in the not yet complete Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Trails Plan. These potential restrictions, and their potential impact to socio-economic resources, are discussed in Section III, below.

### **Trail Locations and Facilities**

The Coachella Valley offers a wide variety of hiking opportunities to the tourist interested in such activities, in locations throughout the Valley. These trails are accessible for all types of recreation, including hiking, mountain bicycling and equestrian activities. The most well-developed system of trails occurs in the Monument, but a number of other options are available to hikers, bikers and equestrians.

The National Monument contains dozens of trails that can be divided into two basic types: those which originate on the Coachella Valley floor, and those which originate in the Idyllwild area. The proposed regional trail plan, not yet complete, is likely to include trail restrictions and/or closures for some of the Coachella Valley trails, particularly during bighorn sheep breeding season, from January through June of each year. Since the trail plan is not complete, the numbers of trails to be affected, and whether they will be permanently or temporarily closed, cannot be quantified at this time.

In addition to these mountain trails, hiking is possible on the Valley floor: the Palm Canyon Wash Trail provides access to the Butler/Abrams Trail, making hiking and horseback riding possible from Palm Springs to Palm Desert. No trails connect to the north side of the Valley, although a number of trails do occur there, both on the Valley floor at the Thousand Palms Preserve, and into the mountains at the Mecca Hills and Joshua Tree National Park.

The trails originating in and near Idyllwild, also within the Monument boundary, are generally above the habitat for bighorn sheep, and are not likely to be affected by the proposed trail plan.

A number of other trails are also available from the Valley floor which are not affected by bighorn sheep restrictions, and will still be available on a continual basis for hikers. They include:

The Mecca Hills are located on the northeastern edge of the Valley, east of the All American Canal. These trails include the **Painted Canyon** and **Ladder Canyon** loop trail, and the **Box Canyon** trail. They provide a broad range of difficulty, from easy to strenuous hiking conditions.

The Thousand Palms Preserve is a 17,000 acre site that is part of the larger Coachella Valley Preserve system.

Near the visitor center, the one-mile long **McCallum Trail** occurs. Other trails include the 2.25 mile **Moon Country Trail**, as well as the trails leading to the Indian, Pushawalla Palms (3 miles), Horseshoe, Hidden Palms (1.75 miles) and Willis Palms (2.25 miles) oases. Horseback riding is permitted on the Willis, Horseshoe, and Hidden Palms Trails.

The Living Desert offers both paths within the park, and access to the **Eisenhower Peak** loop trail. The 6 mile trail offers a moderate level of difficulty, and an elevation change of 700 feet.

Although the primary access points for Joshua Tree National Park occur from the High Desert, several trails occur north of Desert Hot Springs, and into the park's southern boundary. **Long Canyon Trail** is accessed from a trailhead north of Long Canyon Road. The **Blind Canyon Trail** can be accessed from Santa Cruz Road, at the north end of Desert Hot Springs. The trail branches into several directions, and connects to the Long Canyon Trail. **Little Morongo Canyon Trail** is a jeep trail which extends northerly from the north end of Little Morongo Road to Yucca Valley for a number of miles. The **Big Morongo Canyon Trail** extends for 5 miles from Indian Avenue to the Big Morongo Preserve in Morongo Valley. The trail is accessible to both hikers and equestrians.

The Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is located on 29,000 acres in the Little San Bernardino Mountains, northwest of the City of Desert Hot Springs. The Preserve has six trails ranging from easy to moderate degrees of difficulty. The Preserve is accessed off Highway 62 in Morongo Valley.

#### **E. Campgrounds in the Idyllwild Area**

The Forest Service maintains six developed campgrounds in the National Forest surrounding Idyllwild. These are briefly described below.

The **Dark Canyon, Marion Mountain and Fern Basin** campgrounds are located six miles north of Idyllwild, on Highway 243. They include a total of 69 campsites.

**Boulder Basin** campground is located about 15 miles north of Idyllwild, and has 34 campsites.

The **Black Mountain Group Camp**, located in the same area as the Boulder Basin campground, has two group sites available for 15 to 50 campers.

The **Pinyon Flats** campground, on Highway 74, has 18 campsites.

In addition, the Forest Service allows primitive (unserved) camping at several locations, including **Thomas Mountain Ridge, Fuller Ridge, Stone Creek and Apple Canyon**.

#### **F. Trail Use on Federal Lands**

Federal lands within the planning area provide a variety of direct and indirect economic benefits to the general economy. These include the granting of rights-of-way on BLM and Forest Service lands to provide for solid waste transfers, water agency storage, and development of electricity lines. In addition, commercial recreation, such as hiking, camping and ecotourism also provide economic opportunities on both BLM and Forest Service lands.

The BLM and Forest Service lease lands with locally important resource value. Grazing rights are allowed on one allotment within the Monument, and provide a limited economic value.

Commercial ecotourism, camping, hiking, mountain biking and equestrian uses have also become a progressively more important local economic benefit, enhancing the resort industry in the planning area and providing opportunities for increased employment in nature and outdoor oriented industries and programs. The economic value of federal open space is increasing as nearby development, particularly in the Coachella Valley, continues to lessen the amount of non-federal open space.

Although difficult to quantify, because of the generally open nature of trails and access points into the Monument, some data is available on tourism-related activities within the planning area.

The Forest Service has kept data for several years on day hikers on trails which require a permit, including Devil Slide, South Ridge Trail, Deer Springs, Seven Pines, Marion Mountain, and Seven Pines Trail, in the Idyllwild area. In addition, the Forest Service requires permits for overnight hiking and camping in the Wilderness. The number of permits are represented in Table II-7, below.

**Table II-7**  
**US Forest Service Permits**  
**1997-2001**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Permits</b>
<b>Day Hiking</b>	
1997-98	19,365
1998-99	19,058
1999-2000	21,221
2000-01	19,114
2001-2002	20,405
<b>Overnight Hikers in Wilderness</b>	
1997-98	7,802
1998-99	6,389
1999-2000	5,493
2000-01	5,096
2001-2002	4,058

Hiking and overnight camping on Forest Service lands is primarily accessed through either the Idyllwild area, or from the top of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, where there are ranger stations which issue permits. The Table shows that almost 25,000 people hike or camp in the Wilderness in areas requiring permits. The actual number is likely to be higher, given that access to the Wilderness can be made from an almost limitless number of locations.

The BLM has also begun, in the last several years, to keep some records regarding hikers entering the Monument area by using trails on or near the Coachella Valley floor (please note that for purposes of this discussion, the words hikers or hiking are intended to encompass persons on foot, on bicycle, or on a horse). The trails were monitored for the period between January 15 to June 30 of each year, to gauge the effectiveness of voluntary closures for the protection of Peninsular bighorn sheep. Since the data is for a 6 month period, it can be inferred that doubling the data would represent annual usage on the trails (although trail usage is reduced during July, August and September, due to heat, the voluntary closures were well publicized, and it can be assumed that trail usage was down due to voluntary compliance). Both the monitored



and annualized usage numbers are shown in the Table below. The data shows, by activity type, the number of persons seen on each trail for the period from January through June of each year.

**Table II-8**  
**Santa Rosa Trail Use Data**  
**2001-2003**

<b>2001</b>				
<b>Trail Name</b>	<b>Hikers</b> (Observed/Annual)	<b>Bikers</b> (Observed/Annual)	<b>Equestrians</b> (Observed/Annual)	<b>Total</b> (Observed/Annual)
Art Smith	858/1,757	17/34	0/0	875/1,750
Bear Creek	81/162	2/4	0/0	83/166
Boo Hoff	78/156	8/16	18/36	104/208
Cathedral	5/10	0/0	0/0	5/10
Clara Burgess	73/146	12/24	6/12	91/182
Lower Dunn	70/140	67/134	0/0	137/274
Morrow	215/430	12/24	14/28	241/482
Upper Dunn	8/16	24/48	0/0	32/64
<b>2002</b>				
Art Smith	1,219/2,438	41/82	0/0	1260/2,520
Bear Creek	183/366	0/0	0/0	183/366
Boo Hoff	65/130	5/10	22/44	92/184
Cathedral	12/24	0/0	0/0	12/24
Clara Burgess	42/84	4/8	0/0	46/94
Lower Dunn	84/168	143/286	0/0	227/454
Morrow	232/464	33/66	4/8	269/538
Upper Dunn	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>2003*</b>				
Art Smith	685/2,740	12/48	0/0	697/2,788
Bear Creek	79/316	3/12	0/0	82/328
Boo Hoff	30/120	2/8	1/4	33/132
Cathedral	6/24	0/0	0/0	6/24
Clara Burgess	62/248	18/72	0/0	80/320
Lower Dunn	29/116	43/172	0/0	72/288
Morrow	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Upper Dunn	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Skyline	108/432	0/0	0/0	108/432
*Data available Jan. 15 to March 30 only. Observations also more limited in time.				

Although the data on an annualized basis is an estimate only, the Table above clearly shows that even given this limited information, trail use in the Coachella Valley attracts significant numbers of people on an annual basis, ranging on these trails only from an estimated 3,136 in 2001, to 4,180 in 2002, and to 4,312 in 2003. These data indicate a growing interest in the Coachella Valley trail system, which would appear to parallel the growing interest in eco-tourism nationwide. The data above should be considered representative but not quantitative. Insufficient data has been collected to determine the number of hikers in the Coachella Valley on any given day.

Finally, data on hiking in the Anza area is not available. This area is well known for its hiking, bird and spring flower viewing, and can therefore be expected to also generate significant numbers of hikers.

Data on Other Activities Within the Monument

Neither the BLM nor the Forest Service maintain data on other recreational uses within the Monument, including such activities as hang gliding, recreational paintball, recreational shooting, etc. It is therefore not possible to quantify these uses for purposes of this study. However, interviews with BLM and Forest Service staff indicated that the relative use of the Monument for these purposes is low, and that its regulation will not affect a significant number of persons.

### **III. Social and Economic Impacts**

The Resource Management Plan is a compendium of strategies, tasks and activities which affect a number of environmental resources within the Plan boundary. These are detailed in the “Alternatives and Strategies” document prepared for this project, and dated February 1, 2003. The purpose of the following analysis is to determine, based on the demographics described above, what potential impacts to economic conditions surrounding the Plan boundary can be expected. In many cases, the implementation of a particular strategy will have no impact on economic conditions. Certain strategies, however, particularly those associated with affecting access to public lands, have the potential to impact the economic health of the communities which surround the Monument. The issue of primary concern to the communities has been and will continue to be those associated with tourism. As shown in Tables II-7 and II-8, above, the Monument area attracts a considerable number of persons for hiking, bike riding and equestrian activities. Although it is not known what percentage of these persons are local residents, estimates have been made below to attempt to quantify the potential impact to the tourism industry.

#### **a. Management of Biological Resources**

The implementation of the Monument Plan as it relates to biological resource management will have limited economic impacts on the surrounding communities. The individual strategies are discussed individually below.

##### Non-native and Invasive Plant Eradication

Many of the cities in the Coachella Valley have implemented strict non-toxic landscaping policies in areas adjacent to the Monument, in order to assure that the endangered Peninsular Bighorn Sheep is not impacted. (Several plants have been demonstrated to be noxious to the species.) The implementation of the Plan will therefore not affect these communities, since the plans are already in place.

In areas where invasive plants have already occurred, costs associated with their eradication by the BLM or the Forest Service could result in a beneficial impact to the local economies. Specifically, the issuance of contracts for the control of these plants will most likely occur at the local level, if funds for outside services are available. It is impossible to quantify the potential beneficial impact since neither the quantification of the problem, nor the potential funds available, have been identified at this time. However, plant eradication on private projects in the Coachella Valley have ranged from \$30,000 to over \$200,000<sup>16</sup>. Should a substantial number of invasive plants be identified, and should contracts be awarded to the local pest control companies at any of the communities adjacent to the Monument, the potential benefit could be considerable.

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<sup>16</sup> Terra Nova Planning & Research client files, 1999-2002.

A quantified potential benefit will be possible only when the specific tasks identified in the Plan have been completed, and an inventory prepared.

#### Management of Special Status Species

The management of special status species will not, in and of itself, impact social or economic conditions for the surrounding communities. Components of this management effort, especially limitations on access, can potentially impact the regional economy if it affects tourism. Since access restrictions are the primary strategy under which this could occur, the discussion of economic impacts is provided under item C., Recreational Resources.

#### Monitoring Program

A broad-based monitoring program is being developed as part of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). The program will be implemented upon adoption of the plan by member cities. The CVMSHCP includes a component for the funding of on-going management and acquisition activities, which will be funded through the Plan itself. No impacts associated with the implementation of the Monitoring Program are expected.

### **b. Cultural Resource Strategy**

#### Research, Inventory

Both the research and inventory strategies of the Plan provide limited potential for economic impacts. Alternatives A, B and C provide for annual surveys of target sites. These surveys could be undertaken by consulting specialists, under contract to either the BLM or the Forest Service. In this case, funds could flow into the economy from these contracts. However, since this is a specialized field, and very few professionals occur within adjacent communities, it is likely that the economic benefit to adjacent communities would be limited. The benefit to inland empire cities, included the cities of western Riverside and San Bernardino counties, are most likely to benefit should outside expertise be sought by either BLM or the Forest Service.

The social impacts, particularly those associated with local native peoples, could be considerable and beneficial. The local Tribes, particularly the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, own lands within and near the Monument boundary, and are an integral partner in the Monument's management. The Tribe has, particularly in recent years, made considerable efforts to gather data and artifacts to develop a better record of its history in the area. The implementation of the Plan has the potential to increase the resources for the Tribe, and expand the knowledge base of their history, both for their members and the general public.

Although the general public has the potential to learn from visits to culturally significant sites, they have generally been kept confidential, in order to protect them from vandalism and looting. The professional standard for archaeologists in Riverside and San Bernardino counties requires that the sites be identified and mapped with the local repository, but that these locations not be published. Certain provisions of the Plan could limit access to various Monument locations (see Section c. Recreational Resources, below). These provisions therefore have limited potential of impacting the social benefits associated with general access to cultural sites, since their locations are likely to be kept confidential, and access is not generally encouraged. Lack of access to the general public, therefore, could in this case represent a beneficial impact of implementation of the Plan. The Plan proposes to continue to allow access to Tribal members and associated

professionals, for cultural and educational purposes, and would therefore not impact Tribal social benefits associated with research and inventory.

**c. Recreational Resources**

Strategic Recreation Management Plan

The implementation of a Strategic Recreation Management Plan, in and of itself, will not significantly impact socio-economic resources. However, the ultimate partial or complete closure of trails, particularly those originating in the Coachella Valley, where tourism is a significant part of the economy, has the potential to significantly impact the economy of surrounding communities.

In order to quantify trail use and the impacts associated with the implementation of the Monument Plan (and associated documents and efforts), an analysis was conducted to estimate the potential loss of economic revenues to the surrounding communities. A description of this analysis, and its results, follows, first addressing trail use in the Coachella Valley, and then addressing camping in the Monument, particularly from the Tramway and Idyllwild access points.

Hiking – Coachella Valley

As described in Section II, above, the Forest Service and BLM keep some records of the numbers of persons utilizing trails and campgrounds in the area. It is estimated that on the 9 trails monitored by the BLM in the last 3 years, for example, an average of 4,250 persons have hiked, biked or ridden horses (for purposes of the balance of this section, the word hiker or hiking shall encompass all three types of activities).

As described in Section II.D., above, there are approximately 100 trails in the Coachella Valley. The trails monitored by the BLM therefore potentially represent one tenth of the trail use annually in this area. Although it is believed that trail use varies widely based on a number of factors, including level of difficulty, public knowledge of the trail and accessibility, it has been assumed for purposes of this analysis that 42,500 persons annually hike in the Coachella Valley trail system. It has also been assumed that all these persons are tourists, not residents. This results in an extremely conservative analysis, since it is known that residents of the Valley use the trail system extensively. Further, it is likely that persons visiting the Valley for hiking will use more than one trail during their stay. Therefore, the assumption that 42,500 tourists hike in the Coachella Valley annually is considered extremely conservative.

The implementation of the Monument Plan will include provisions, largely based on other documents' restrictions, for temporary or permanent closure of a number of trails in the Coachella Valley. The primary source of information on these closures will be the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Trail Plan, which is currently being prepared but is not complete. It is therefore not known how many trails will be affected. If it is assumed that a significant number of trails will be closed, either for significant periods of time or permanently, and that these closures would influence the decision of some tourists to come to the Coachella Valley on vacation, then an impact to the Valley's economy would result.

For purposes of this analysis, an extremely conservative assumption has been made: that the trail closures would result in 25% of those persons assumed to be using the trails would not come to

the Valley. Since the assumption that 42,500 persons use the trails also assumes that all these persons are tourists, a resulting loss of 10,625 persons could be expected. Again, this assumption is exceedingly conservative, since the resident population of the Valley is known to use the trails on a regular basis.

Should the assumed 10,625 persons not visit the Valley annually, this would represent a loss of one third of one percent of the 3 million overnight visitors coming to the Valley currently. The loss appears to be very small, and would likely be filled by regional population growth and by visitors who would come to the Valley for other reasons.

Based on Table II-6, above, the average visitor spends \$335.46 per day while in the Valley, including hotel and other purchases. If it is assumed that the average visitor has a 3 day stay (a high percentage of visitors come for weekends), then an average stay would cost the visitor \$1,006.38. Extended to include the 10,625 visitors who are assumed to be lost due to trail closures, the total annual loss to all Valley businesses would be \$10,692,787.50. For purposes of comparison, the total tourism economy, based on 3 million visitors per year, and an average expenditure of \$335.46 per person, is estimated to be \$1,006,380,000.00. The potential loss to the tourism economy would therefore be 1% or less. These estimates are extremely conservative, and the actual economic impacts are expected to be considerably less.

Assuming that the total potential impacts associated with tourism could total up to \$10.7 million, and using the data shown in Table II-6, the potential loss to local jurisdictions can also be estimated. Most Coachella Valley cities charge about 10% in transient occupancy tax per night for hotel rooms in their city. Assuming the loss of 31,875 room nights at \$126.27 per night, the resulting annual loss to all cities would be about \$400,000.00. The amount actually lost by each city would depend on the number of hotel rooms in that city. Further, the local jurisdictions collect 1% of the 7.75% sales tax charged on taxable purchases. Based on Table II-6, it can be estimated that taxable purchases per visitor per day total \$119.45. On an annual basis, therefore the total potential loss to local jurisdictions could be about \$35,000.00 annually. Again, the amount lost by each local jurisdiction would vary based on its shopping and dining opportunities. Overall, therefore, local jurisdictions in the Coachella Valley could experience a total annual loss of \$435,000.00, or about \$48,000.00 per City for each of the 9 Valley cities. This number, as stated above, is considered to be extremely conservative, and is likely to be considerably less.

The single largest mitigating factor associated with the potential tourism impacts associated with trail closures or restrictions within the Monument area is the large number of alternatives available to the tourists who visit the area. Although a number of trails may close, either temporarily or permanently, there are a number of other trails, including those on the north side of the Coachella Valley floor, those in Idyllwild and its surroundings, above the habitat boundary for the bighorn sheep, and those at the top of the Palm Springs Aerial tramway, also above the bighorn sheep habitat boundary, which will still be available. These areas may experience increases in usage due to the closure of trails, and therefore improved economic conditions. It is expected, however, that the improvement in economic conditions will be directly associated with the ancillary facilities available. That is to say that just as the Coachella Valley tourist comes to the area for the variety of recreational opportunities available, those tourists who might seek other opportunities will look for areas which provide a variety of options. For this reason, it is expected, for example, that the community of Idyllwild could see a significant increase in tourist activity, while communities such as Pinyon Pines and Mountain Center, which are largely

residential in nature and have limited commercial and recreational opportunities, are likely to see little increase in activity.

Finally, since the BLM charges no fee for access to the local trail system, no impact would result to BLM revenues as a result of trail closures and loss of hikers.

#### Hiking – Forest Service Lands

As shown in Table II-7, above, the Forest Service issues approximately 20,400 day hiking permits per year in the Monument area. The bulk of the lands managed by the Forest Service occur above those areas considered critical habitat for the bighorn sheep, and are therefore not expected to experience the restrictions being considered for Coachella Valley trails. The trail closures from the Coachella Valley may result in a positive impact to the Idyllwild economy, insofar as hikers who are unable to access trails in the Valley may make the one hour drive to the Idyllwild area, or the ride to the top of the Aerial Tramway, to access those trails. Since this assumption cannot be quantified, however, it has been assumed that the implementation of the Monument Plan will have no economic effect on the Idyllwild economy.

#### Camping

The majority of campgrounds in the monument are accessible from either Idyllwild or the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway/Long Valley area. All these campgrounds require Forest Service permits. The forest service issues about 4,000 overnight camping permits annually. The bulk of the lands managed by the Forest Service occur above those areas considered critical habitat for the bighorn sheep, and are therefore not expected to experience the restrictions being considered for Coachella Valley trails. The implementation of the Monument Plan is therefore not expected to impact the local economy in Idyllwild.

#### Hang Gliding, Recreational Paintball and Recreational Shooting

Neither the Forest Service nor BLM maintain data on hang gliding, recreational paintball or recreational shooting within the Monument. It is therefore not possible to estimate the number of persons who might be affected by restrictions on Monument lands. However, all three of these sports are highly specialized, and practiced by very limited numbers of the general population. It is likely that all three sports would be practiced by only a few hundred persons annually. These persons may be required to find alternative locations for their sports. However, regardless of the alternative implemented, the potential economic impact on the regional economy would be miniscule.

#### Pacific Crest Trail

The implementation of the Monument Plan would result in the management of an area 500 feet in width surrounding the trail. It is not expected that this management effort will eliminate use of the trail by hikers and campers. Therefore, no economic impact is expected as a result of implementation of the Monument Plan.

Pets and Domestic Animals

The implementation of related plans, including the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains trail plan (not yet available), will likely impose prohibitions on dogs on many of the trails in the Coachella Valley. In many instances, particularly in areas of critical habitat for bighorn sheep, this prohibition already occurs. Although there may be a perceived inconvenience to hikers from these prohibitions, they will have no economic impact on the surrounding communities.

Forest Service Adventure Pass

The proposed elimination of the Adventure Pass for parking on Forest Service lands would result in an economic impact to the Forest Service. The revenue generated in the Wilderness is displayed in the Table below.

**Table III-1  
US Forest Service Adventure Pass Revenues  
1997-2001**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Revenues</b>
1997-98	\$102,292
1998-99	\$93,327
1999-2000	\$90,618
2000-01	\$81,490
2001-2002	\$90,157

Since 80% of the revenues are returned to the local stations, the Forest Service would experience a reduction in revenue, at the local level, of \$72,000 annually.

**d. Geological Resources Strategy**

The proposed Monument Plan includes provisions for the study of the Monument's geology, and its use as an educational tool for the general public, including provisions for guided walks and signage for self-interpretation. These activities will increase the awareness level of the general population of the features of the Monument, and will provide for additional opportunities to access the area at different locations. The activities will not, in and of themselves, impact economic conditions, but may have a beneficial social impact when these activities are combined with other education programs developed through the Plan. A broader understanding of the geology, cultural resources, biology and other natural processes of the Monument and its surrounding will benefit all the residents of the surrounding communities.

**e. Educational Resources Strategy**

The Educational Resources Strategy focuses on the provision of information to the public, ranging from maps of trails to allowable uses. The dissemination of information will play an important role in the beneficial social impacts described above. The printing of materials and packaging of marketing information may provide the BLM and the Forest Service with opportunities to contract with local firms, who would receive economic benefits associated with those contracts. It is difficult to quantify these potential impacts, because the quantity of materials is not known, and its publication will be dependent on budgetary constraints. However, these activities should represent a beneficial economic impact overall.



The dissemination of information will also provide a beneficial economic impact associated with increased awareness of recreational and educational opportunities for the tourism industry. Better information on the facilities and activities available will encourage the use of these facilities and activities, and potentially could offset the potential loss associated with trails restrictions, and increase the numbers of tourists who come to the surrounding communities.

**f. Management of Scientific Resources**

The management of research projects would not be expected to have a significant impact on social or economic conditions in the area. Research projects conducted within the monument have the potential to generate a beneficial social impact associated with the increased knowledge that would be available to the general public, as stated above. Overall, however, the impacts associated with research projects and activities should be negligible.

**g. Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses**

Private Property

The BLM and Forest Service are required to maintain access for private property owners within the Monument. This requirement will not change. Neither will both agencies' ability to allow for other access instruments, such as leases and rights-of-way. The implementation of the Plan will increase the outreach each agency is involved in with private property owners, but will have no economic effect on either these property owners or the surrounding communities.

The implementation of the Monument Plan will not impact private property rights. Those private property owners wishing to develop their properties within the Monument Plan boundary will be subject to the rules and regulations of the local jurisdiction within which they occur. These regulations, including General Plans and Zoning Ordinances, provide standards and regulations for development of property which will continue to be in full force and effect, and govern the development potential of these properties.

Facility Development

The development of new facilities in the Monument, and the improvement of existing ones, has the potential to create a significant beneficial economic impact on surrounding communities. It is not known at this time what additional facilities might be constructed, however, it is likely that design and construction contracts would be let to local firms in the surrounding communities. It is also likely that the benefited communities would vary depending on where the new facilities were located – for example a building needed near Idyllwild will benefit that community, but would not be likely to benefit the community of Banning significantly.

If it is assumed that an average building might be 15,000 square feet, and construction costs would be about \$125.00 per square foot, that building's costs could be \$1.8 million. These funds will flow back to the surrounding communities directly, and will also generate increased indirect spending. Economic analysis often considers a multiplier of 2.5 in assessing the potential benefits associated with indirect expenditures. On that basis, the construction of a \$1.8 million building could generate \$4.5 million in revenues throughout the community. The construction and rehabilitation of buildings within the Monument, therefore, could have a very significant beneficial economic impact on surrounding communities.

Finally, the construction of new and refurbished facilities will occur only based on budgetary allocations, and are therefore difficult to quantify or assign to a particular time period. The expected beneficial impacts, therefore, are likely to be sporadic and unpredictable.

Visitor Use/Hwy 74; Monitor Visitor Use; Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety; and Fire Plan

These component of the Plan deal primarily with the lines of communication with other agencies, including Caltrans, law enforcement and local jurisdictions, to ensure that Monument plans are coordinated. These activities will have no impact on either social or economic conditions in the surrounding communities, and will be administrative in nature.

The coordination of activities and improvement of lines of communication will result in more efficient use of resources, and potential could be a beneficial impact for those agencies. For example, better coordination between the BLM, Forest Service and fire departments could result in more efficient use of resources during fire fighting efforts, which may benefit the budgets of the individual agencies. Since these efforts cannot be easily quantified, however, the exact potential for these cost savings cannot be specified.

**h. Water Resources – Surface and Ground Water Resources**

The management and improvement of water issues within the Monument represent administrative activities which are not expected to have an economic or social impact on surrounding communities. Activities under this strategy will be conducted by BLM and Forest Service staff, in cooperation and coordination with other agencies, and will not involve others.

**i. Acquisition Strategy – Acquisition Criteria**

The Monument Plan does not establish a plan for the acquisition of specific lands. Nor does it identify potential numbers or sizes of parcels. The Plan simply established the criteria by which the purchases might occur.

Ultimately, the purchase of land, however, will represent a beneficial economic impact for surrounding communities, in different ways. First, property transfer tax and other funds associated with the sales would be returned to the County of Riverside, for its use in county governance. In addition, the proceeds from a sale, particularly a sale by a resident of the surrounding communities, would result in discretionary income which would likely, at least in part, be spent locally. Finally, as discussed previously, discretionary spending results in indirect spending, which has a potential to create an additional 2.5 times the spending as the original expenditure. All these benefits could, ultimately, results in considerable beneficial impacts to the surrounding communities.

#### **IV. Summary and Conclusions**

The Monument Plan proposes the management of resources within a large area of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains. The strategies included in the Plan have the potential to affect social and economic resources for a number of surrounding communities, ranging from the Coachella Valley to the Desert Pass cities and the mountain communities of Idyllwild and surrounding areas.

The single largest potential impact could be to the area's tourism industry, which represents a \$1 billion industry in the Coachella Valley alone. Although the Monument Plan does not, in and of itself, impact the region's trail system, the BLM and Forest Service will participate in the implementation of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Trails Plan, when implemented. Although it is unlikely that tourism would be significantly affected, because of the high number of alternatives available to those trails which may be restricted in the Trails Plan, it is possible that the tourism economy could see a temporary reduction of \$10 million, or 1% of the annual gross revenues, should a portion of the tourists who visit the Valley choose to vacation elsewhere because of the trail restrictions. This impact would be expected to be recovered quickly from regional growth in tourism as a whole.

The potential impacts to the Mountain Communities are expected to be beneficial, because the ultimate restriction of certain trails on the Valley floor may result in increased visitation to communities such as Idyllwild. These impacts could improve economic conditions in this area by generating additional room nights, food and other retail services, and participation in community events.

The Monument Plan has the potential to benefit the local economies of surrounding communities by necessitating contracts for goods and services. Since the annual budget allocations which might be assigned to the activities in the Plan, such as invasive plant eradication and construction of new facilities, cannot be predicted, this potential beneficial impact cannot be quantified at this time.

The Monument Plan also has the potential to result in increased efficiencies in the provision of certain services, such as fire fighting, due to the heightened level of coordination mandated in the Plan. Again, since the occurrence of these events cannot be predicted, these beneficial impacts cannot be quantified.

#### **Cumulative Impacts**

The implementation of the Monument Plan is expected to have limited cumulative impacts. The Plan establishes policies and strategies which will require additional implementation tools. Some of these tools, including the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Trails Plan, will be complete shortly. Others have yet to be prepared by either the BLM or the Forest Service.

All these activities will be subject to additional public and required NEPA review as they are proposed for adoption. Annual federal budget allocations have the potential to be the largest factor in the implementation of the Plan strategies, and associated activities which could generate both revenues and impacts. Since those allocations cannot be predicted, the potential beneficial impacts associated with the implementation tools for the Plan could vary widely from year to year, and cannot be quantified at this time.

Where possible in this document, the potential cumulative impacts (such as those to tourism associated with both the Monument Plan and the upcoming Trails Plan) have been quantified. However, since the bulk of the implementation tools have yet to be developed, the Monument Plan's cumulative impacts are expected to be limited.